

Ballarat Courier
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Spanish Galleon

**Warrnambool Mahogany Ship
Has It Been Discovered?**

Melbourne, Wednesday

For many years - since the first settlement of the Western District - there have been statements made that a Spanish galleon lies at the bottom of the sea off the Victorian coast. Many other wrecks lie there, but they have all been located.

Fruitless searches have been made for the vessel, and the existence of the vessel became to many people merely a legend or something born of an imaginative mind. Now, however, the startling statement has been made that the whereabouts of the missing vessel have been located. The discoverer is Mr. W. James, of Brunswick, who has delved deeply into history, and from theories he formed from his reading he made a practical search, and, according to his statement, he has found the vessel.

In an interview with a "Courier" reporter, Mr. James said that shortly he would startle the residents of Victoria with the full announcement of his discovery. Mr. James produced a piece of petrified wood, which, he said, a professor of the University, had declared to be Spanish walnut. Another article in his possession was a piece of beaten copper. These were relics taken from the vessel, and to prove that the vessel was an old one he had ascertained that the copper had been punched by the means of a chisel, and, therefore, had been worked before the auger was invented, about 160 years ago.

"What do you think the name of the vessel was?" asked "The Courier" reporter.

"You will be astonished," replied Mr. James "to know that I know the name of the vessel, in fact, it is cut in lead below the taffrail. I will not announce the name just yet, but I have proved to my own satisfaction that she was one of the four exploration vessels sent out by the Spanish Government in 1614. Three of these vessels returned, but the fourth never came back. She went down off the Australian coast, and lies half-buried in the sand within 2 ½ miles of the township of Port Fairy. People who have searched for the vessel have looked for her in the direction of Warrnambool, but that is 10 miles away from the right spot. People may pooh pooh my statement, but I have the proof. Why, man alive, I could cut her wooden figurehead off at any time; but that will not suit me. I can raise that vessel. What a sensation it will cause to see a stately old Spanish galleon of the time of the old sea-dog, Drake, sailing up the waters of Port Phillip Bay. She may even visit London - perhaps get there in time for the Coronation, who knows? It will only cost me £100 to get on that vessel's deck and ascertain what she contains. She is a single-masted vessel, as all Spanish vessels of that date were and she is in excellent order. In length she is 80 feet, and has a 20 feet beam. She also had a 6 feet bulwark."

Asked what he intended to do, Mr. James said that he had taken the matter in hand himself, and would carry it through. He added that one of the oldest residents of the district could remember seeing the wreck some 50 years ago. Though

naturally elated about his discovery, Mr. James asserts *[sic]* vigorously that his is no day-dream, but a real *[word unreadable in the original article]* discovery, and he expects to get to work on the raising of the vessel within the fortnight.